



taken territory. Only one other family lived on the island.

Here young Keith trained for the battle of life, under rough, nerve-racking circumstances, with two revolvers never unhitched from his belt and with cattle-thieves, and other care-free gentlemen all about him when he crossed to Texas and the Mexican border to buy cattle. He rose at four every morning, roughed it for sixteen hours daily, often slept outside—and prospered.

He reared and bought cattle all over the surrounding territory to kill

for their hide and tallow. The beef, not worth anything in Texas in those days, was fed to swine! He amassed a herd of 4,000 stock cattle and 2,000 pigs. Stock cattle were then worth \$2.50 to \$3.00 and steers brought \$1.00 for each year of their age. (Today, alas! we city folk pay thirty-five cents a pound for the choicest parts of such steers!)

Then something happened to change the course of Keith's career. His uncle, Henry Meiggs, was the famous builder of the first railway over the Andes and of other epochal South American lines. Minor's eldest brother, Henry Meiggs Keith, had joined his uncle in Peru and had taken over a contract from his uncle to build a railroad in Costa Rica for the government. One day, in 1871, Minor received a letter from his brother asking him to come to Costa Rica.

Minor's job was to run the commissariat of the railway. His brother subsequently died and the construction of the railway was suspended through the government not being able to supply the money. In order to carry out his brother's undertaking he recontracted the coast line of the railway with the government. Also to make possible the building of the mountain section for which the government had not the needful \$6,000,000, he made a contract with the Costa Rica government to settle their external debt which had been defaulted for thirteen years. He proceeded to London and after many difficulties arranged a settlement of the debt and all arrears of interest, and obtained \$6,000,000 for the construction of the railway.

The International Railways of Central America—the "Pan-American Railway"—is not a mere paper railroad. Half of it is already built. Connection has been made, on the Pacific side, with the National Railways of Mexico, at the Guatemala boundary. The road runs down the Guatemala coast and then cuts clear across the continent, to Puerto Barrios, on the Atlantic side; this trans-continental line is now in profitable operation, the net earnings (for profits) in the first four months of this year having been \$667,545. From mid-continent the line is being built straight through the little republic of Salvador to La Union, on the Pacific. Next it will pass through Honduras and join the Nicaraguan road. The Costa Rican system will then be reached, and from Port Limon to the Panama Canal will be the final link on the northern side of the "great divide." The South American extension, Mr. Keith is confident, will follow.

More than five hundred and seventy miles of the International Railways are to-day actually operating—and making money. And the daring project is daily creeping towards completion.

"I have heard, Mr. Keith, that you hope to bring about the union of the five Central American republics—Guatemala, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. Is that your ambition?" I asked. He gazed into space. Then:

"I believe that will come. It will be a great thing for them all. But only railroads can bring it about. The people of Costa Rica are to-day strangers to the people of Nicaragua although their countries adjoin. There must first be commercial and social intercourse. The railroad will make that possible."—B. C. Forbes, in Leslie's.

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Philadelphia.—In the first six months of 1916, the companies of the Pennsylvania railroad system have retired 326 employees under the pension rules. This total includes fifty-six men and women whose retirement, dating from June 1st, to-day received the final approval of the board of directors. Of the entire number of employees placed on the roll of honor in the last six months, thirty-three, or more than ten per cent., worked for the railroad fifty years or more, while one hundred and forty-nine, or nearly half, were in the active service more than forty years each.

The Pennsylvania Railroad system expended in pensions during the first half of 1916, in round figures, \$750,000. Pensions are being paid at the present time at the rate of more than \$4,000 per day. Since the pension system was established on January 1, 1900, the total expenditure has been almost \$13,000,000. A total of nine thousand four hundred and sixty-four employees have been retired under the pension rules since that time. Of this number, four thousand six hundred and six are at present living and receiving pensions.

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Hamline, Minn., when he is one hundred years old. He will be one hundred years of age September, 1917. Aside from taking a correspondence course at Hamline, Dr. Higgins is also a student in the Southern California University, where he is studying psychology and philosophy. He recently preached in a large Methodist church. His sermon was analytical, evangelical, and revealed a mind vigorous and progressive with the old-time faith in the power of the gospel to redeem and sanctify the individual and humanity. Dr. Higgins is a veteran of the cross, and Dr. Hingeley, the expert in the history of retired ministers, says, "I believe Dr. Higgins is the oldest minister in the world."

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